

Fran Pavley NEWS

Assemblymember, 41st District



A MONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER TO THE 41ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT
(Including Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Encino, Malibu, Hidden Hills, Lake Sherwood, Oak Park, Pacific Palisades, Port Hueneme, South Oxnard, Santa Monica, Tarzana, Topanga, Westlake Village, and Woodland Hills.)

OCTOBER 2003 ISSUE

Budget Challenges Still Face Legislature and New Governor

The recall election is over, and I am committed to rolling up my sleeves and working cooperatively with Governor-elect Schwarzenegger on behalf of 35 million Californians. A balanced budget that resolves the projected \$8 billion deficit needs to be submitted by the Governor to the legislature by January 10, 2004. Making additional cuts without turning our backs on our commitment to public schools, health care, transit and transportation improvements, and other important services will be an immense challenge.

One of my biggest concerns is what the new governor will decide with regard to the vehicle license fee (VLF, or what some have called the "car tax.") Several years ago, when California was running a budget surplus during the dot-com boom, the state started paying roughly 2/3 of our vehicle license fees. The 2% fee did not change – just the amount paid by the car owner. In the last couple of years, our dot-com economy collapsed and revenues plummeted to below expenses. Earlier this summer, the state's Finance Director determined that the state could no longer afford the subsidy, and the 2/3 rebate was suspended. The car registration notices people are receiving in the mail reflect the full amount again.

All revenues generated by your VLF go directly to cities and counties, and are used by them for law enforcement, fire protection, road projects, etc. If the VLF amount should be cut to just the portion that car owners have been paying for the past several years, that will amount to either a \$4.2 billion loss to local government if the state stops making up the difference, or if the state does continue backfilling local government, the budget shortfall will be increased by 50% to \$12.2 billion.

Last week I spoke to the Port Hueneme Chamber of Commerce. Many members seemed unaware that the VLF has not been raised and that it is still at the same 2% it has been since 1936. Also, that the money all goes directly to local government for local services.

I remain open to any budget proposals that might restore the rebate while still protecting schools, local government, transportation, health, and other vital services. It is interesting to note that Governor Davis in his January 10, 2003 budget did not propose ending the subsidy to motorists. He had proposed instead a slight increase in alcohol and tobacco taxes, and in taxes for the high income tax brackets. His budget proposed a balance of cuts and tax increases, without relying on the massive borrowing that finally had to be done to solve the budget deficit. The 2/3 voting approval by the state legislature made it politically impossible to pass any new taxes of any kind, which left the legislature and governor with few options. It's also worth noting that in the past 50 years, only Republican governors (Reagan, Wilson and Deukmejian) have been given the Republican votes necessary to reach the 2/3 needed to raise taxes.

We all know that the economy and recessions are cyclical. Very difficult choices will have to be made this year. I welcome your input.

I will also continue to work on other budget-related issues such as spiraling medical costs and worker's compensation reform that are seriously impacting our businesses, schools, non-profits, and local government.

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Environmental Education To Become Part of K-12 Curriculum



Governor Davis hands copy of signed bill to Pierce Brosnan as keepsake for his work in support of AB 1548

On October 2, at a signing ceremony at the beautiful Santa Monica Pier Aquarium, Governor Davis signed my bill, AB 1548, into law. Also present were representatives from Heal The Bay, who sponsored AB 1548; CalEPA Secretary, Winston Hickox; and others including actor Pierce Brosnan.

This bill directs the Office of Education on the Environment within CalEPA to develop environmental education principles for elementary and secondary education, and use these principles to create a model curriculum. National Geographic, a strong supporter of the legislation, said that "AB 1548 does not reinvent the wheel; it refines it for a child of the 21st Century. Environmental education is critical to empower future generations." The State Board of Education will evaluate and implement it into the framework and textbooks during normal adoption cycles.

California has serious air and water degradation that affects our health and our economy. AB 1548 will help students make informed decisions on how to live and work in ways that are positive to our environment. As a teacher, I know that kids care about the

environment. Lessons about the environment will get them more engaged in the learning process.

Mark Gold, Heal the Bay Executive Director, called the signing of this bill "a watershed moment for environmental education and the children of California. For the first time, children will learn how their individual choices will have impacts on natural resources and human health."

Ventura County Activist Honored with Street Naming

At the October 7 meeting of the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, long-time community activist, Roma Armbrust, was honored. Wetlands Drive was formally renamed "Roma Armbrust Wetlands Drive" along the Ventura County section of Arnold Drive leading to Ormond Beach. I was terribly saddened to hear that Roma died just three days after this recognition.

The action taken by the Board of Supervisors recognized the years of tireless work that she gave to the community on countless issues, and specifically for spearheading the drive to bring the vision of a restored Ormond Beach Wetlands to a reality. The first acquisition toward a complete functioning wetland was made last year.

This restoration project was one of the first things that caught my attention last year when redistricting added the coastal areas of Oxnard and Pt. Hueneme to the 41st Assembly District. Roma, a retired teacher, was a natural leader and inspiration to countless people in Ventura County who remain committed to protecting the beautiful natural resources in the county. The continued work of assembling and restoring the Ormond Beach Wetlands will be a fitting tribute to her, and will be an extraordinary part of the legacy of this extraordinary woman.



"Front row, l-r: Roma Armbrust, seated; Jean Harris; Assemblymember Hannah-Beth Jackson; Ventura County Supervisors Linda Parks and John Flynn; Robin Squier, Field Rep. for Assemblymember Pavley. Standing behind Roma are Ventura County Supervisors Kathy Long and Steve Bennett."

Ormond Beach Funding to be Considered

Related to this, on Thursday, October 23, the State Coastal Conservancy will meet in the City of Ventura to consider an appropriation of \$23 million in resource bond funds. These funds, if approved, would be a sufficient amount to purchase the parcels needed to create a roughly 750-acre wetland area at Ormond Beach. These 750 acres would be enough to create a self-sustaining wetland area with the needed tidal action and freshwater flow to stay healthy and bring the wetlands back to life. If additional funds can be identified in the future, I would support an even expanded area.

I sent a letter to the Conservancy in support of this appropriation, and encourage the community to come to the meeting. Let the Conservancy board know how important this will be to the residents, wildlife, and economy of the Oxnard, Pt. Hueneme and adjacent areas.

Date: Thursday, October 23

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Place: Ventura City Hall Council Chambers
501 Poli Street, Ventura

Four Great Trips Without Leaving the 41st Assembly District

- **CHANNEL ISLANDS** – Stroll around the Channel Islands Marina viewing all the boats. Rent a kayak or reserve a half-day or a full-day boat trip to Anacapa Island with “Island Packers.” If you’re there on a Sunday, don’t miss the Farmer’s Market.

Directions: 101 freeway to Victoria Avenue, Ventura. South to Channel Island Blvd. Right turn to the Marina and Harbor.

- **WILL ROGERS STATE BEACH** – Bring your bikes to the parking lot at Temescal Canyon at PCH. A 17-mile bike path along the beach extends all the way to Redondo Beach. For an easy ride, go under the Santa Monica Pier to Venice, and then return to “Back to the Beach” restaurant right on the sand for lunch.

Directions: Pacific Coast Highway to Temescal in Pacific Palisades.

- **MALIBU** – Start with breakfast at Coogies in the City of Malibu, then walk through the Malibu Lagoon to Surfrider Beach. Last weekend, my family and I saw a magnificent diversity of birds, including egrets, pelicans, cormorants, terns, grebes, Great Blue Herons, and many others. Drive over Malibu Canyon (our newest State Scenic Highway) to Malibu Creek State Park just south of Mulholland. Walk the two-mile flat loop past dramatic cliffs and oak groves, and visit the Nature Center.
- **CALIFORNIA HISTORY** – Look back on California’s history by visiting Los Encinos State Park in Encino, the Leonis Adobe in Calabasas, and Will Rogers’ historic home on Sunset Blvd. Lots of great places to eat on Swarthmore, north of Sunset in the Palisades, just west of Will Rogers State Park.

Ahmanson Ranch Escrow Opened

On Friday, October 10, the State Public Works Board provided the last, and unanimous, approval for the purchase from Washington Mutual of the 2,960-acre Ahmanson Ranch. The purchase price came entirely from voter-approved Prop. 50 bond funds that can only be used for water quality, wetland and watershed properties such as Ahmanson Ranch. A short escrow period will follow, during which the various administrative details will be finalized. We can all begin chilling the champagne and grab on to the cork, ready for it to be popped very very soon.

From the beginning, this has been a team effort. Thanks must be given to Congressmen Henry Waxman and Brad Sherman; State Senator Kuehl; L.A. County Supervisor Yaroslavsky and Ventura County Supervisor Parks; L.A. City Councilman Zine and his city; the cities of Agoura Hills, Hidden Hills, Malibu, and Westlake Village, with the City of Calabasas very much in the lead.

Thanks are also due to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and their excellent staff and Board; to the Coastal Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Board; Heal the Bay; Rob Reiner and Rally to Save Ahmanson Ranch, and Chris Albrecht, CEO of HBO; to Mary Wiesbrock and Save Open Space, who refused to acknowledge the word "impossible;" and to the countless environmental and community groups like the Sierra Club, Resource Conservation District, Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation; Joe Behar and his many supporters in the West Valley; the Woodland Hills Homeowners Organization; and many many others.

And all of these efforts were supported by thousands of residents who wrote letters, sent e-mails, attended hearings and testified at every opportunity in support of the preservation of Ahmanson Ranch.

I especially want to thank Governor Gray Davis for having the vision to see the regional, resource and recreational value of this extraordinary parcel, and Resource Secretary Nichols, Bob Hight, Al Wright, Sam Schuchat, and all the others, without whose constant support and work this day could not have come.

We are on the eve of being able to say, and literally, that "Ahmanson Ranch truly and forever belongs to the people of California."

Ahmanson Ranch Photo Album:



"A sign of things to come."



"The amazing Mary Wiesbrock, who kept hopes alive that this property could and would ultimately be preserved -- standing on Ahmanson Ranch as imminent parkland."



"l-r. L.A. Sup. Zev Yaroslavsky, Gov. Gray Davis, Attorney General Bill Lockyer, actor Rob Reiner, HBO executive Chris Albrecht, Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks, SMMC Exec. Director Joe Edmiston, Resource Secretary Mary Nichols. Oct. 1 celebration on site of the imminent acquisition."



".....Or imagine 3,050 houses, acres of asphalt, 45,000 more vehicle trips/day, felled oak trees, a hotel, commercial/retail, etc., etc."

Topanga Arundo Removal Project

Earlier this summer, the state Coastal Conservancy approved a grant application to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for a project in Topanga Canyon to help eradicate the plant, *Arundo Donax*. Arundo is a highly-invasive reed that displaces native plants and animals, damages creeks and streams, and creates fire hazards, especially in fire-prone areas like Topanga Canyon. Although the original project was to remove the Arundo using herbicides, I was pleased to learn that in response to community concerns and suggestions that alternative methods be tried first, the herbicide project has been put on hold for roughly six months.

The MRCA will, instead, work with the L.A. Conservation Corps and community volunteers during the upcoming fall and winter months, when Arundo is somewhat dormant. The biomass of the plants will be chain sawed to the ground and disposed of using chippers. The hope is that this will sufficiently control and/or kill the plants. The six-month manual removal pilot project will be reviewed in the spring for signs of regrowth that may indicate that manual methods are not sufficiently effective and that herbicides are necessary.

I am grateful to the MRCA for being willing to work with the members of the Topanga community, and to allow this period of time for the success of manual removal to be measured. My thanks also go to the Coastal Conservancy for extending the grant period to allow this trial period.

Port Hueneme Chamber Breakfast

On October 8, I had the pleasure of speaking to the Port Hueneme Chamber of Commerce at their monthly breakfast meeting. Among the topics covered were the recall results from the day before and the upcoming budget challenges that will be faced by the Legislature and the new Governor-elect, the history of California's vehicle license fee and how those fees fund local government, and promising new hydrogen fuel vehicle technologies.

I was also delighted to learn at the breakfast that Port Hueneme Councilmember, Murray Rosenbluth, will be receiving this year's "Outstanding Service Award" from the California Association of Library Trustees and Commissioners for his work with Port Hueneme's Ray D. Prueter Library. Councilmember Tony Volante also shared with me that Tim Blaylock, chief professional officer for the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Oxnard and Port Hueneme, has been selected by the Association of Boys and Girls Club Professionals as their "Executive of the Year." The Association represents nine western states, and Blaylock was chosen from among all of the nominees for this honor.

Congratulations to both Councilmember Rosenbluth and Tim Blaylock on these wonderful recognitions.

Latin American Youth Leadership Conference

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) held its 2nd Annual Youth Leadership Conference and Salute to Educators Banquet on October 17. I was honored to attend and to present certificates of recognition to seven truly outstanding individuals, including Oxnard resident and Pt. Hueneme High School student, Elizabeth Garcia. Elizabeth received the Student of the Year award. Elizabeth had been accepted to participate in the Women in Politics Summer Institute in Sacramento, which is a non-profit non-partisan project intended to engage students in public policy and state politics.

Elizabeth prides herself on having overcome many personal and financial obstacles, while staying at the top of her class academically, being Soccer Team Captain, and current Senior Class President. She has already shown herself to be a leader, and I was very pleased to be able to participate in recognizing this impressive young woman.

New Las Virgenes Elementary School Breaks Ground

As a teacher, there aren't many things I like better than to see a new school underway for California's school children. On Wednesday, October 15, the Las Virgenes Unified School District officially broke ground for their new Yerba Buena Elementary School. Yerba Buena kids have been sharing a campus with Lindero Canyon Middle School for many years, and both schools have been suffering from overcrowding. I was very happy to work with the School District to help move their proposal through the State Architects Office, and share the excitement of all the children, teachers, staff members and others who will be lucky enough to move to this beautiful new school in just a few years.



Learn How to Protect Your Identity

Roughly 9.9 million individuals were victimized in 2002 and more than 27 million have been hit by identity theft in the last five years. The cost to banks, businesses and consumers has been upward of \$50 billion annually. For this reason, I will be hosting an "Identity Protection Workshop" with the Office of Privacy Protection in the California Department of Consumer Affairs.

Date: Thursday, October 30, 2003
Time: 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Place: Tarzana Regional Medical Center Auditorium
18321 Clark Street, Tarzana

Topics will include identity theft prevention tips; protecting your financial information, Social Security number, and medical privacy; what to do if you are the victim of identity theft; and reducing the flow of unwanted information. Space is very limited, so please arrive early.

If you cannot attend in person, I have prepared an informative booklet on how to protect yourself from identity theft. You can call or e-mail my district office and request that copy be mailed to you.



International Walk to School Day

Congratulations to all of the students and parents who participated in the International Walk to School Day on Wednesday, October 8. What a difference in our community and the health of our children if students walked to school every day. Traffic and air pollution would be reduced. Children would be healthier and arrive at school energized and ready to learn.

I want to especially acknowledge the planning and promotional efforts of the City of Calabasas, particularly Robert Yalda and Jaimi Garcia, who had tremendous participation at their three elementary schools: Chaparral, Lupin Hills, and Bay Laurel on a foggy, but exciting, morning.

Santa Monica Farmer's Market

It's always a pleasure to go out to the various communities in the 41st Assembly District and to have a chance to meet people in person and hear what's important to them. Thanks to Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom for coming by when I held a Mobile District Office at the Santa Monica Farmer's Market last month. Thanks also to the residents who stopped and talked with me. Issues included acquisition of the Ballona Wetlands, rental and housing issues, Santa Monica College, state budget impacts, and 415 PCH (which is the former Sand and Sea Club.)

Asian Pacific Youth Opportunity

Applications for the 14th Annual Asian Pacific Youth Leadership Conference (APYLP) are now available. Each year, APYLP hosts a leadership conference at the State Capitol in Sacramento. Fifty Asian and/or Pacific Island high school juniors and seniors will be selected to attend the four-day, three-night leadership conference from April 1-4. APYLP private fundraising and sponsorships cover all costs for travel, lodging, meals, and conference materials.

This will be an opportunity for the students to meet Asians and Pacific Islanders who are state legislators, elected officials, key capitol staff, and community activists. The proposed program includes a mock legislature in the Senate Chambers, where participants serve as Senators and debate public policy and prepare bills for committee hearings with the goal of enhancing and encouraging their leadership skills and potential.

Applications must be postmarked by November 8. For an application or additional information, call APYLP at (916) 497-0776, or visit their website at www.apylp.org.

Tri-Valley Special Olympics Equestrian Competition

I was honored to be invited for the third year to the Kiwanis Club of Warner Center's annual Tri-Valley Special Olympics Equestrian Competition. This year's competition was held on October 12 at the Pegasus Creek Equestrian Center in Agoura. 86 developmentally disabled children and young adults and their coaches spent all year preparing for this very special day of competition and fun for the participants. Special thanks go to Kiwanis members Sandy Miereano, show Chairman, and to John Haynes, who worked for the past ten years to coordinate this event.

It was a wonderful inspirational day under the oaks for the families, the many volunteers, and, of course, the riders who take such pride in their accomplishments. I was fortunate enough to be asked to present certificates to the "Most Inspirational Athlete" and to the "Coach of the Year."

Children's Nature Institute Dinner

It's always a joy to see deserving people recognized for the work that they do for community. The Children's Nature Institute (CNI) is a wonderful organization dedicated to educating children, parents, and teachers in the natural sciences. On October 12, they held their annual dinner and silent auction in Santa Monica. They also took the opportunity to honor Laurie David, a long-time friend of CNI and committed environmentalist, with their "CNI Leaf Award," presented by actor Rob Reiner. Laurie is a steadfast advocate for environmental protection, and I was very pleased to add my letter of congratulations to the beautiful Tribute Book that was presented to her.

Assemblymember Pavley's Committee Assignments

Appropriations Committee
Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism, and Internet Media Committee
Budget Committee
Education Committee
Transportation Committee
Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
Select Committee on Title IX
Select Committee on California Ports
Select Committee on Sustainability
Chair, Select Committee on Air and Water Quality
Chair, Budget Subcommittee #3 on Resources
Legislative Advisory Committee – Wildlife Conservation Board
Legislative Advisory Committee – California Coastal Conservancy
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Board

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If you know of anyone who you think would like to receive these newsletters, please e-mail their name, mailing address and e-mail address, and I'll be happy to add them to my list.

